

Relationships Help Us Sink or Swim



All young people need healthy relationships with family, friends, and other important people in their lives, such as teachers and coaches. Strong, positive connections to other people help them learn and grow.



Our Kids Network asked a group of grade 7 and 8 students to talk about relationships.



Poster developed by grade 7 and 8 students from Eastview Public School, Oakville.

All quotations included in the Relationships Help us Sink or Swim poster are as stated by the students, no coaching or editing has taken place.

Developmental Relationships were created by the Search Institute®

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Learn more about Our Kids Network and building assets at www.ourkidsnetwork.ca



In our discussions, the students learned about Developmental Relationships and the 5 dimensions that help relationships become strong and healthy.

Developmental Relationships Help Us Swim!

Have good role models
Be playful
Have many friends from different groups
Be respectful

Understanding – put yourself in the other person's shoes
Support good listening
Good communication

Express care: show me that I matter to you and I can trust you.
"Thank you Mom for spending time with me and having fun."



Expand possibilities: connect me with new experiences, people, and places.
"Thanks Uncle for helping me find what I love."



Challenge growth: encourage me to keep getting better and learn from my mistakes.
"Thanks BFF for always making me laugh and making me try new things."



Share power: respect me, give me a say, and let me lead sometimes.
"Thank you Nana for always supporting me no matter which path I decided to take."



Provide support: help me complete tasks, achieve goals, and gain confidence.
"Thank you Dad for helping me through the move and settling down."



"Give me guidance when I'm stuck on something."
"Teach me how to connect with other people."
"Make sure I don't feel lonely."
"Talk with me about the future."
"Cheer me on no matter what."
"Have my back."
"Ask me how to solve a problem."
"I appreciate you more than you know."
"Encourage me to try new activities and face my fears."
"Let me be myself."
"Please don't give up on me."



Don't Let Us Sink!

The students also talked about barriers to positive relationships such as arguing, jealousy, stress, gossiping, and bullying.

"I felt invisible. No one talked to me."
"People were talking about me behind my back."
"I didn't have a say in what happened."
"I was being left out of conversations."
"She always calls me the wrong name."
"Making fun of my culture isn't funny."
"Talking trash is not talking"
"My friend started a rumour about me."
"No one invited me to join."



What Can You Do?

Asset-Building

The toolkit contains a broad variety of resources and has been designed to support all professionals, regardless of stage or level of asset-building.

■ www.ourkidsnetwork.ca/Asset-Building

Watch Our Video!

After they had learned about Developmental Relationships the students talked about how relationships with family, friends and peers make a difference in their lives. They then went on to create a video with the support of adult allies called Relationships Help Us Sink or Swim – How Will you Help Us?

■ www.ourkidsnetwork.ca/Relationships-Matter

Learn More About Relationships

Strong relationships play an important role in bullying prevention, positive mental health and well-being, youth engagement, social emotional learning, and many other risk and protective factors.

■ www.ourkidsnetwork.ca/building-relationships
■ www.search-institute.org
■ www.parentfurther.com